

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

STATE OF MONTANA

JUDY H. MARTZ
GOVERNOR



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Planning Division

Director Jan Sensibaugh
Department of Environmental Quality

Director Bud Clinch
Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

Chairman Dave Ballard
Board of Oil and Gas Conservation

Dear Jan, Bud, and Dave:

I understand that several significant steps have occurred in preparing for the development of a joint State-Federal environmental impact statement to address coal bed natural gas exploration and production in Montana. I applaud the cooperative efforts of the state and federal agencies in placing a high priority on this effort and I anticipate the timely completion of this project will have growing importance as we make informed energy decisions for our future.

It is important that affected agencies contribute to the effort and that the document meets the MEPA needs of the agencies with permitting authority for on-the-ground activities. Of particular concern is the need to ensure this EIS meets the programmatic needs of the Board of Oil and Gas Conservation to address its court approved settlement agreement with Northern Plains Resource Council. I have decided to include the Board of Oil and Gas Conservation as the State's co-lead agency joining with the Department of Environmental Quality and the Bureau of Land Management in preparing this important document. This designation is intended to demonstrate our commitment to preparing a comprehensive document useful to all and avoiding the need for supplemental or additional work by the affected agencies after the EIS is completed.

Sincerely,

JUDY MARTZ
Governor